



Don't Swallow Your Gum!: Myths, Half-Truths, and Outright Lies About Your Body and Health

Aaron E. Carroll, Rachel C. Vreeman

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People have more access to medical information than ever before, and yet we still believe "facts" about our bodies and health that are just plain wrong. **DON'T SWALLOW YOUR GUM!** takes on these myths and misconceptions, and exposes the truth behind some of those weird and worrisome things we think about our bodies. Entries dispel the following myths and more:

- You need to drink 8 glasses of water a day
- Chewing gum stays in your stomach for seven years
- You can catch poison ivy from someone who has it
- If you drop food on the floor and pick it up within five seconds, it's safe to eat
- Strangers have poisoned kids' Halloween candy

With the perfect blend of authoritative research and a breezy, accessible tone, **DON'T SWALLOW YOUR GUM** is full of enlightening, practical, and quirky facts that will debunk some of the most perennial misconceptions we believe about our health and well-being.

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Louisa Keron says

It was a decent book. The issue with it is that you could just read the title of each section and then skim the rest. Honestly, you aren't missing much if you do that. There were attempts of humor which was good, but it didn't feel natural. It was as if they read the book once they were done, decided it was too dry and sprinkled jokes in it.

Efox says

I highly recommend this book to anyone who has ever thought "I need to drink 8 glasses of water a day" or "Nexium is so much more effective than Prilosec" or "eating a banana will make mosquitoes like you more." The authors of the book go through these and other common myths and facts of common health care tips. It's broken up into how we get diseases (hint, they're not from bad weather or having wet hair in the cold) myths about our bodies (that hand size trick ladies. . .) pregnancy, babies and children (think twice about baby Einstein) and each one is full of common things you've heard about your health and how they stack up to the science. I am looking forward to sharing this book with friends and family and for their new book (which I think just came out) to end up in my hands soon!

Abdulrahman Kauther says

A must read for everyone.

Charli says

All those body and health myths and half-truths are exposed - everything from the relationship between foot and penis size to gum stays in your stomach for seven years - with numerous delightful scientific commentary. Well researched with tons of documentation, but not dry or fussy in any way.

Starr says

Short and interesting. Does green mucus mean a sinus infection? Do you lose all your body heat through your head? Do antibiotics really effect birth control pills? In one to 4 pages, these types of questions are addressed through scientific data.

Amanda says

Man, I LOVE books like this. Being a lover of trivia, I look forward to books that debunk(or prove) popular myths, not only for my presence of my mind(I don't have to worry about my head being uncovered), but because of the humorous way these doctors often present the facts. Don't Swallow Your Gum is a really good example of this. Drs. Aaron and Rachel succeed in pointing out the stupidity of believing in these myths without making you feel stupid and offer lots of good research to back their opinion up. And now I can rest easy knowing that I'm NOT losing immense amounts of body heat through my head and eating at night does not cause an increase in the enormity of my stomach(although that doesn't mean it's good for you).

My only complaint? Need more lies uncovered please!

Lora says

Besides the fact that I pet sit for one of the author's pug, this is really quite informative and entertaining. All those things your mother told you were true, all those things you learned in the halls of your middle school... yeah, it's probably in here. This isn't dry and boring either - definitely quite entertaining. :)

Gemma says

Thank goodness! The average human being does NOT swallow 8 spiders a year.

I can now sleep in peace.

Michelle says

This book is actually written by a very close friend of mine. He is one of the brightest individuals I know. We had a blast listing to some of the ideas for the book and hearing his thoughts along the way. I have only heard great things about it, but haven't read it myself yet. I am going to his book signing tonight and then will report back...

Lisa says

Spoiler Alert...

Most things are a myth.

Love,
Lisa

Courtney Stoker says

It was surprising to see the old weight loss=calories in vs. calories out canard in a book specifically meant to challenge myths about the human body. And it certainly wasn't the only positive claim made by the authors. While they provided lots of evidence for debunking the myths/negative claims throughout the book, none was provided for the handful of positive claims they made.

It's normally difficult to make myth debunking boring. It's like writing a boring book about sex. But the only reason I even finished this book is that it's short. It was surprisingly dull.

karen says

i think everyone should read this book. and while it is full of useful things to know (like which more expensive drugs are exactly the same as cheaper versions or that you dont need to drink all that water you are drinking) there are some things that i am too stubborn to stop doing. like putting butter on my burns. it makes me feel better, even if it "doesnt help" and is "actually worse for the burn". i dont care - i dont want to know. and im still going to eat anything that falls on the floor. in my own house, not on the subway. the way i see it, its my filth, so i deserve whatever gets on my food. i hate waste, mythical 5 second rule or no. but i am going to enjoy drinking my beer BEFORE. my liquor and swimming after a buffet loaded with sundrenched mayonnaise. thank you, book!

Bunny says

I love useless trivia. I love semi-useless trivia. And I love things that bust myths, even if I've never seen a certain show.

So how on earth could I have been as bored to tears as I was by this book? Seriously. Even their attempts to interject humor made me cringe and flip the page.

Horrid.

Runa says

It's a decent book--I'll admire any book that addresses common misconceptions and backs them up with science. A lot of the facts are repetitive, though, same old myths being busted from book to book (but then again, it's the same myths that people continue to buy into, like Vitamin C for colds, eyestrain from reading in the dark, etc.) I'm actually going to read Ken Jennings' mythbusting book Because I Said So! : The Truth Behind the Myths, Tales, and Warnings Every Generation Passes Down to Its Kids next, so it'll be interesting to see how the two compare. Just from the back cover summary, looks like I'm in for some repetitive overlap. Between these two, mental_floss, and Mythbusters, it just feels like a constant stream of repetition, though credit should be given to the Mythbusters for probably coming up with the most unique myths to bust. I'd

like to see more of that. (Although really I would just like to see more people actively questioning everything.)

Jenny says

I remember reading the article when they released their findings in Dec 2007. And I also remember that's where I learned that poinsettias are fine and that you don't lose any more heat from your head than you do from any exposed part of your body. Also that it is a myth that we only use 10% of our brains. It was a quick read and the only other thing I learned was that sometimes pharmaceuticals are very bad: like changing the colour of the green Prozac pill to pink, call it Sarafem and charge more money for it.
